

**DART Commission Meeting
Unapproved Minutes
Municipal Service Center
May 2, 2016**

Commissioners Present: Mary LaForet, Charlotte Williams, Richard Olson, Dan McGillivray

Staff Present: Karen Murphy, Director of Public Services, Jan Yuergens, Assistant Director of Public Services, Amy Dooley, DART Supervisor

Others Present: None

Char Williams called the meeting to order at 2:30 pm.

1. DART Commission Membership Update: Richard Olson and Dan McGillivray have agreed to another term on the DART Commission. Thank you for your continued support to the DART Commission.

2. Approval of April 2015 Minutes: Minutes were unanimously approved.

3. Current Capital Grants

- 8 replacement busses went into service during summer and fall of 2015
 - All busses are lift equipped and have security cameras
 - 2 busses have a raised floor which will accommodate 3 wheelchair positions. If 3 wheelchairs are transported at one time there are 4 seats available for walk-on passengers. Some passengers have had difficulty getting used to the extra step to board the busses with the raised floor.
- 2 new accessible bus shelters installed fall of 2015. One on Rodd Street and one on McDonald Street.
- 1 additional accessible bus shelter installed in the fall of 2015 – Jerome Street parking lot to help with pickup concerns at the Open Door .
- Delivery of 3 replacement busses were received this week. Again all lift equipped and with security cameras.

4. FTA/MDOT Business

The City of Midland experienced its first triennial review by the Federal Transit Administration in July of 2015. This review audits policies and procedures of transit agencies every three years to ensure they meet all federal requirements. FTA commented it was one of the best first triennial reviews they had performed with a new 5307 agency. Although some difficulties were found all were rectified in a timely matter to meet all FTA requirements.

5. Three No Shows In 30 Day Policy Update

The 3 no shows in 30 day policy was implemented in January 2015. Since that time 220 passenger have fallen into step 1 of the policy:

- 65 of those passengers did not pay the \$16.00 fee and have not returned to DART Service
- 46 passengers went on to step 2 of the policy. 11 of those passengers have not returned to service.
- 10 passengers have fallen into step 3 of the no show policy. Of those 5 passengers have returned to service.

Passengers who fall into step 3 of the no show policy can be permanently suspended from DART Service. The goal of Dial-A-Ride is not to permanently suspend any passengers. We created a process for third step no show passengers to help them work to regain service:

1. Serve another 30 day suspension.
2. A questionnaire is sent out to the passenger to complete to try to determine why they are not available to meet the bus for schedule rides.
3. The completed questionnaire is brought to a meeting at the DART office with the DART Supervisor.
4. At the meeting the DART Supervisor works to identify the root cause of the no shows and to develop skills to help the passenger continue to use DART services and not miss the rides they schedule.

6. Driver Training

- Dementia training provided to drivers fall of 2015.
- DART has not finished developing the training video staffing agencies on how to use DART transportation services.
- In addition to standard annual trainings DART recently provided wheelchair securement review, community CPR and defensive driving.

7. Transportation Task Force

Karen Murphy continues to work with the Midland Transportation Task Force. This group applied for a grant through MDOT to help determine the unmet transportation needs of our community. An request for proposal was sent out, evaluated and a vendor was selected. Currently the task force is working on a contract for the vendor's services.

8. Non-Emergency Medical Transport Grant

Michigan Transportation Connection was awarded a grant from the Michigan Health Endowment Fund and Midland Area Community Foundations. The grant funded a two year pilot program for Clare, Gladwin and Midland Counties to provide non-emergency

medical transportation for Medicaid recipients. This program would coordinate transportation service for Medicaid recipients for public and private transportation providers in Midland, Clare and Gladwin counties for medical appointments and would allow transportation across county lines. The City of Midland is working out details to participate in this program by providing transportation within the City limits of Midland.

9. Reinstate Sunday Service

City Council requested information from DART staff on the cost of reinstating Sunday Service as several Midland residents had shared their concern regarding lack of Sunday transportation. Cost information for the two Sunday service options were provided to the DART Commission. Option #1 provided costs to reinstate Sunday Service hour as previously operated from 8:30 am 6:00 pm. Option #2 provided costs to reinstate Sunday Services hours from 8:30 am until 2:30 pm. The Commission supported a recommendation for Option #2 on a trial basis for City Council to consider at the May 9th City Council meeting.

10. 2017 ADA Vehicle Accessibility Plan

There had been not been any changes to DART's service area, fares or vehicles inventory. The DART Commission unanimously approved two 2017 ADA Vehicle Accessibility Plans:

- One approved Accessibility Plan the includes the addition of Sunday service hours
- One approved Accessibility Plan does not include the addition of Sunday service hours

11. Booking Rides on the half Hour

DART has continued to evaluate system efficiencies using our current software provider and booking rides throughout the hour. Staff has determined that our current trip booking process has contributed to several operational deficiencies:

- Multiple pickup windows around the hour results in rides that start and end in the same area not fitting together for maximum efficiency.
- Booking rides around the hour takes longer for the dispatcher to book the rides as they must sort through several routes to find the appropriate ride placement. As a result passengers are waiting on hold for longer wait times to book rides.
- Same-day cancellations and same-day bookings have a much more significant impact on our current booking process because routes are pre-planned. Passengers are provided a very specific pickup time (i.e. 8:15 – 8:35). If the passenger cancels their ride it is nearly impossible to fill that time slot with another ride whose pickup point and destination are similar to the cancelled ride. Currently approximately 20% of all rides scheduled are cancelled.

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Staff is interested in returning service to scheduling rides every half hour vs. around the hour for most routes in hopes of increasing efficiencies:

- Rides will not be assigned to routes until ½ hour before the scheduled pick up time.
- By not assigning the rides to routes in advance dispatch will be able to group trips in the most efficient manner real-time, which should result in a reduction of vehicle miles and vehicle hours.
- Dispatchers will be able to book rides more quickly because the ride time options will be limited to two choices every hour and the dispatcher will not be assigning the ride to specific route. This will mean passengers will spend less time on the phone booking their ride.
- Passengers are given one of two pickup times per hour so cancelled rides are more easily replaced.
- Passengers are given the same pickup time window for each day travelled to the same location with the same drop off time.

12. DART Retirements

Paula Draves, Customer Service Representative and Glen Reid retired from Dial-A-Ride during 2015. Both full time positions have been replaced and one additional full-time dispatcher was added to help meet operation needs.

13. Commissioner Requests

- Rick Olson requested information on Dial-A-Ride passenger age breakdown. Yuergens stated that we can provide this information at the next meeting as this statistic is recorded as part of a reporting requirement for MDOT.
- Mary LaForet provided information regarding advertising on busses for staff to investigate.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:40 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

MDOT Required Signature

Jan Yuergens
City of Midland
Assistant Director of Public Services

Charlotte Williams
Chair – DART Commission